United Nations S/2013/7

Security Council

Distr.: General
7 January 2013

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus

I. Introduction

1. The present report on the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) covers developments from 21 June to 15 December 2012 and brings up to date, since the issuance of my report (S/2012/507) dated 29 June 2012, the record of activities carried out by UNFICYP pursuant to Security Council resolution 186 (1964) and subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution 2058 (2012). A separate report on my mission of good offices to Cyprus will be presented to the Council in March 2013.

2. As at 15 December 2012, the strength of the military component stood at 860 for all ranks and the strength of the police component stood at 65 (see annex).

II. Activities of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

3. UNFICYP aims first and foremost to prevent a recurrence of fighting and contribute to the maintenance of law and order and a return to normal conditions. Its mandate requires reconciling, as far as possible, security considerations and the maintenance of the military status quo while allowing Cypriots who live and work in the buffer zone to pursue civilian activities and enjoy full and productive lives. Such an approach, when successful, helps build confidence between the communities and contributes to the overall United Nations effort in support of the peace process.

A. Prevention of a recurrence of fighting and the maintenance of the military status quo

4. During the reporting period, UNFICYP continued to maintain the integrity and stability of the buffer zone. The period was marked by the continuance of a low level of military violations committed by the two opposing forces. Cooperation between UNFICYP and the opposing forces continued to be characterized by a positive relationship with the respective chains of command. Good working relations have been established with the incoming commanders of the Turkish forces

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and Turkish Cypriot security forces; good working relations have been maintained with the Commander of the National Guard.

5. However, the non-recognition by the opposing forces of the 1989 aide-memoire continues to be problematic. Previously reported military positions established by both opposing forces inside the buffer zone that violate the status quo remain in place. Turkish forces retained the checkpoint in the Louroujina pocket. They also conducted regular inspections of the liaison post at Strovilia and repeatedly overmanned the position, in violation of the military status quo. The United Nations holds the Government of Turkey responsible for the status quo in Varosha.

6. As in recent years, the opposing forces refrained from conducting major exercises during the reporting period. In line with the practice in place since 2008, both the National Guard and the Turkish forces announced the cancellation of annual exercises code-named "Nikiforos" and "Toros", respectively. In the same vein, the United Nations mission remains committed to reducing tensions along the buffer zone through the implementation of military confidence-building measures. To this end, the UNFICYP Force Commander has engaged in dialogue with the commanders of both opposing forces. While there have been no concrete outcomes in this important area, these engagements do allow for meaningful discussion on future activities.

7. With a view to preventing the escalation of tensions, UNFICYP continued to resist regular attempts by both opposing forces to effect low-level changes to the military status quo across the buffer zone. A robust observation, reporting and liaison infrastructure, underpinned by regular patrolling, enabled issues to be resolved at the lowest appropriate levels and is an important element in maintaining confidence and stability. Through its liaison role, UNFICYP continues to play a critical part in building confidence between the opposing forces.

8. On 12 November, however, Turkish forces erected, without prior consultation with UNFICYP, a fence in the buffer zone near the town of Avlona with a view to preventing unauthorized civilian activity close to its ceasefire line. On 30 November, the mission removed the structure. In response, some 100 armed soldiers of the Turkish forces entered the buffer zone and reinstalled the fence, confronting members of an UNFICYP military contingent in the process. UNFICYP strongly protested this serious violation and the Turkish forces withdrew. Subsequently, a solution was negotiated by which the structure was dismantled and UNFICYP made alternative arrangements to address Turkish concerns.

9. In late September, tensions increased significantly between the two sides when three armed Cypriot police officers crossed through the buffer zone near the village of Louroujina in pursuit of a Turkish Cypriot vehicle for alleged traffic offences and were arrested by Turkish Cypriot police. UNFICYP determined the status and welfare of the officers within hours using its police, civilian and military liaison channels, attended the military and civil court hearings two days later, and facilitated the handover of the police officers in Nicosia that evening. The officers were charged with minor offences and released. While the joint communications room proved incapable of resolving the issue at the time, negotiations under its auspices for the return of the Cypriot police vehicles continue.

10. Tensions related to exploration for natural resources off the shores of Cyprus continued during the reporting period. In November, Cyprus opened negotiations with several international companies interested in exploiting potential resources within four designated blocks to the south and south-east of the island. Turkey protested the development and called on companies to withdraw from the tender or face exclusion from new energy projects in Turkey. The statement confirmed Turkey's position in support of Turkish Cypriot objections that such actions prejudge the rights of the Turkish Cypriot community. In reply, Cyprus issued a statement in defence of its inalienable and sovereign right to exploit hydrocarbons in its exclusive economic zone, but reiterated that Turkish Cypriots would benefit from the exploitation through a solution to the Cyprus problem.

B. Demining

11. The two sides continue to withhold access for demining to the four remaining mined areas in the buffer zone. One is located south of Varosha and is under the control of the Turkish forces; three are in the Louroujina pocket and are under the control of the National Guard. During the reporting period, the National Guard completed the removal of anti-personnel mines from one of those mined areas in the buffer zone, with a view to complying with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. At the same time, the National Guard left its anti-tank mines in place.

12. There has been no progress in terms of fulfilling the Security Council's call on the parties to extend demining operations outside of the buffer zone. Concerns persist, in particular with regard to mined areas adjacent to the buffer zone along the respective ceasefire lines. In October, severe flooding raised concerns over the potential displacement of mines from a minefield of the Turkish forces into the buffer zone. While UNFICYP, with the assistance of the Mine Action Service, took steps to contain the danger, the issue remains unresolved. It is strongly recommended that minefields adjacent to the buffer zone be removed, as both a safety and confidence-building measure.

C. Restoration of normal conditions and humanitarian functions

13. During the reporting period, UNFICYP approved 35 of 40 civilian projects in the buffer zone for both communities, mainly for the construction of houses and commercial ventures such as photovoltaic parks. To support such activities, UNFICYP regularly facilitated the provision of basic services to both communities and the improvement and maintenance of essential infrastructure for public utilities and services in the buffer zone. Instances of joint cooperation on such technical work, as recorded in my last report, were few during the current reporting period.

14. While UNFICYP supports cooperation and other civilian projects in the buffer zone, it is firmly opposed to unauthorized civilian activities, particularly when such activities may increase tensions in the buffer zone and thus adversely affect the military status quo. Cooperation with UNFICYP should also extend to the prompt addressing, by the courts, of outstanding cases of assault on UNFICYP personnel and damage to United Nations property. Three judicial cases resulting from such incidents involving Greek Cypriots are pending. Occasional restrictions on United

Nations staff members of Greek Cypriot origin seeking to perform their duties in the north remained in place.

15. In October, a new university opened in the bicommunal buffer zone village of Pyla. While the initial student body numbers no more than 145, the vast majority of whom are Greek Cypriot, the university could see its enrolment grow to over 2,500 students. Such numbers could double the local population and threaten the delicate demographic balance in the village. Neither side is permitted to maintain a full-time police presence in Pyla. As the first point of contact for law and order issues, UNFICYP remains concerned about the impact of the university on the security situation in this sensitive area of the buffer zone. UNFICYP considers the project unauthorized until all security, law-and-order and civilian concerns are addressed.

16. UNFICYP continued to address day-to-day humanitarian and welfare issues faced by Greek Cypriots and Maronites residing in the north and by Turkish Cypriots residing in the south. Nineteen home visits were conducted during the reporting period. Concerns over the deteriorating health of elderly Greek Cypriots and Maronites and over the absence of Greek-speaking doctors to treat these patients were voiced repeatedly. For the Turkish Cypriots in the south, welfare and impediments to religious worship were the issues of concern. There were no new developments regarding the establishment of a Turkish language school in Limassol. UNFICYP also facilitated 25 religious and commemorative events, involving more than 5,000 people, which were held in the buffer zone or required crossings to either side.

17. UNFICYP continued its weekly delivery of humanitarian assistance to 347 Greek Cypriots and 126 Maronites in the north. UNFICYP also continued to observe the functioning of the Greek Cypriot schools in the Karpas peninsula. UNFICYP facilitated the supply of textbooks and teaching aids to the schools, although some delay in Turkish Cypriot approvals meant that this was completed after the commencement of the school year.

18. UNFICYP assisted in addressing the legal and humanitarian issues surrounding the imprisonment of 13 Turkish Cypriots in the south and 7 Maronite and Greek Cypriots in the north and the temporary detention of individuals on both sides. UNFICYP conducted weekly visits and facilitated family visits to inmates at detention facilities in the other community to ascertain the conditions and welfare of those serving sentences. It attended 11 court hearings to enhance confidence in the judicial proceedings.

19. UNFICYP continued to support civil society initiatives that foster bicommunal cooperation and reconciliation. It facilitated 83 bicommunal events, in which more than 2,778 people participated, in cooperation with international and local partners. The events included regular meetings between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political party leaders and representatives under the auspices of the Embassy of Slovakia, as well as sporting, cultural and educational events. UNFICYP, the good offices team and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also facilitated the participation of civil society organizations in discussions on women, peace and security.

20. UNFICYP lent support to a variety of bicommunal projects in the buffer zone implemented by UNDP and its local partners. In October, UNFICYP supported an interregional civil society conference that took place over four days in the buffer

zone between the Ledra Palace Hotel crossing points. Organized by a Cypriot civil society network and funded by the United States Agency for International Development, the event brought together 200 civil society delegates from 28 countries working on reconciliation in Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and Cyprus.

21. UNDP supported, with European Union funding, the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage for the renovation of cultural heritage sites on both sides of the island. In collaboration with UNFICYP, UNDP completed the stabilization of the buildings at the Ledra Street/Lokmaçı crossing point. On 22 November, the European Commission announced a €27.2 million annual programme of assistance aimed at the social and economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community, building on significant assistance delivered since 2006. The programme will focus on promoting the economic integration of the island, the overall objective being to help prepare for its reunification.

22. UNFICYP police continued to assist and facilitate a number of investigations by the respective police services into criminal matters that occurred within the buffer zone. It did so by conducting joint patrols with local authorities to intercept smuggling, hunting and burglaries. During the reporting period, there were 14 reported thefts and 21 investigations; a search warrant was executed for a narcotic-related matter in the bicommunal village of Pyla. Of particular significance was the facilitation of the transfer, from the north to the south, of four persons arrested for criminal charges, three of whom were wanted on European arrest warrants.

23. UNFICYP police facilitates both the Technical Committee on Crime and Criminal Matters and the joint communications room. The Technical Committee continued to meet on a regular basis, holding five meetings during the reporting period. Discussions included the bicommunal confidence-building measures, such as a planned outreach project to the higher education sector in both communities to raise awareness of law-and-order issues within the buffer zone and concerning Cypriots arrested in the other community. The joint communications room continued to provide a forum for the two sides to cooperate and share information on criminal matters. A total of 35 new information requests were received and 74 responses were given.

24. UNFICYP police continue to provide escorts for convoys with Turkish Cypriot civilians and humanitarian supplies in accordance with the October 2010 leaders' agreement upon the opening of the Limnitis/Yeşilırmak crossing. While civilian traffic over the crossing continues to flow reasonably unimpeded, the Turkish Cypriot side has increased requests for more formal escorts than had been agreed, from one escort three times a week to as many as six escorts a week, sometimes twice daily. While the majority of these requests are facilitated, UNFICYP has declined some because they fall outside the original agreement and because of a lack of resources.

25. The Committee on Crossings, which was tasked by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders in December 2010 to reach an agreement on new crossing points, met once during the reporting period. The Committee remained in a deadlock as the sides were unable to agree on the location of the next new crossing point.

26. During the period from June to November 2012, UNFICYP recorded more than 660,000 official crossings through the buffer zone, a rate comparable to that of

previous periods. From May to October 2012, goods for a worth of almost €0.5 million crossed from the south to the north, down some 60 per cent from the previous reporting period. Goods moving in the opposite direction amounted to some €2.1 million, representing a 75 per cent decrease from the previous report's figures, as the provision of electricity had ceased.

III. Committee on Missing Persons

27. During the reporting period, the Committee on Missing Persons continued to carry forward its bicommunal project on the exhumation, identification and return of the remains of missing persons. As at December 2012, the Committee's bicommunal teams of archaeologists had exhumed the remains of over 900 individuals on both sides of the island. The Committee is determined to keep its genetic analysis at the highest level of international best practices. To this end, in July 2012 the Committee engaged the genetic laboratory of the International Commission of Missing Persons (ICMP) in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the sample testing of DNA. To date, the Committee has sent over 780 samples to be tested at ICMP. The final identifications are done by the Committee's own bicommunal genetic unit at the Committee's bicommunal anthropological laboratory in the United Nations protected area in Nicosia. To date, the remains of 336 individuals have been returned to their respective families, including 16 during the reporting period.

IV. Financial and administrative aspects

28. The General Assembly, by its resolution 66/268, appropriated the amount of $54.6 million gross for the maintenance of UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013, inclusive of the voluntary contribution of one third of the net cost of the Force, equivalent to $17.5 million from the Government of Cyprus and the voluntary contribution of $6.5 million from the Government of Greece. I invite other countries and organizations to do likewise, with a view to reducing the portion of the cost of UNFICYP covered by assessed contributions.

29. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period of six months, as recommended in paragraph 42 below, the cost of maintaining the Force would be limited to the amount approved by the General Assembly.

30. As at 20 December 2012, the total outstanding assessed contributions to the special account for UNFICYP for the period from 16 June 1993 to 20 December 2012 amounted to $13.9 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to $1,455.9 million.

31. Reimbursement of troop- and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made only for the periods up to 29 February 2012 and 30 June 2010, respectively, owing to the delay in the receipt of assessed contributions.

V. Observations

32. During the reporting period, the situation along the ceasefire lines remained mostly calm and stable. The opposing forces extended cooperation to UNFICYP and

generally refrained from actions that could compromise the resumption of political negotiations. The continued low number of military violations and the cancellation of the annual exercises on both sides were welcome developments. The opposing forces should build on this positive trend and engage with UNFICYP on military confidence-building measures.

33. The events in Avlona in November, however, were regrettable and speak to the important need to avoid unilateral actions. When concerns arise, the parties should take advantage of existing liaison mechanisms with UNFICYP, as doing so will serve to build confidence between the sides. I reiterate my belief that the situation would improve if both sides formally accepted the 1989 aide-memoire used by the United Nations for the past 23 years to regulate activities in the buffer zone.

34. The arrest of armed Cyprus police officers by their Turkish Cypriot counterparts in September demonstrates not only the porous nature of the buffer zone but the challenges faced by UNFICYP in monitoring the full length of the zone with current resources. It also speaks to the need for the sides to show restraint. The transparent and swift manner in which the Turkish Cypriot side addressed the issue allowed tensions to subside. I commend this approach, as well as the constructive role played by UNFICYP. I urge the parties to make greater use of the joint communications room to strengthen their ability to manage incidents of this nature.

35. Safety and stability in the buffer zone continued to be negatively affected by unauthorized civilian activity. It is essential that the authority of UNFICYP to approve or deny activities within the buffer zone be respected by the local population and authorities. The university in Pyla is an example of an activity that threatens to create a fait accompli on the ground, and is of concern. I call on the respective authorities to act decisively towards individuals, as well as entities, who engage in unauthorized activities in the buffer zone and thereby challenge the authority of UNFICYP and its ability to assist both sides in abiding by the ceasefire arrangement.

36. I remain of the view that the establishment of economic, social, cultural, sporting or similar ties and contacts will have a positive impact on the negotiations and the broader climate. Such contacts nurture trust between the communities and help address the concerns of isolation expressed by the Turkish Cypriots. Further, greater economic and social parity between the sides will make an eventual reunification not only easier but also more likely. In the context of an internationally sanctioned peace process, efforts in the opposite direction can only be counterproductive.

37. Tensions and rhetoric in and around Cyprus related to the exploitation of natural resources continue, and are of concern. Once again, I call on all parties to make every effort to avoid raising tensions, which may have a negative impact on the security situation, including in the buffer zone. It is important to ensure that any new-found wealth, which belongs to all Cypriots, will benefit both communities. Developments during the reporting period have only served to confirm my view that the discovery constitutes a strong incentive for all parties to find a durable solution to the Cyprus problem. It is my hope that it may engender a deeper cooperation for the benefit of all stakeholders in the region.

38. The United Nations remains committed to supporting the critical work being done on behalf of the families of victims through the Committee on Missing

Persons. I count on the support of all parties to preserve the non-political and bicommunal character of the work of the Committee. I once again urge all parties to be accommodating of the exhumation requirements of the Committee throughout the island. I commend the financial support of individual Member States and the European Union to the bicommunal efforts of the Committee.

39. While a partial clearance by the National Guard of one mined area in the buffer zone was completed, mine fields both in and outside the buffer zone remain on the island. The October flooding is a reminder of the danger such mines pose, not only for patrolling military personnel but also for civilians. I call upon the parties to facilitate, without delay, access to the remaining mined areas in and outside the buffer zone, in line with Security Council resolution 2058 (2012). The United Nations stands ready to assist the parties in their aspiration to achieve a mine-free Cyprus.

40. I encourage the parties to continue efforts to achieve further progress with regard to future possible crossings. Progress on this front will help improve the overall confidence between the communities. I urge the parties to seek, through pragmatic and results-oriented discussions, mutually beneficial agreements resulting in greater social and economic interaction between the two communities.

41. Regrettably, restrictions continue on the movement of locally employed United Nations personnel. Freedom of movement for all United Nations personnel is a matter of principle for the Organization and an operational requirement for UNFICYP. I call upon the Turkish Cypriot authorities to respect that principle.

42. UNFICYP continues to play an essential role on the island by exercising authority in the buffer zone and contributing to keeping the calm and to the resolution of various issues affecting the everyday lives of both communities. However, its ability to play this role depends on the commitment of the sides to refrain from challenging the authority and legitimacy of UNFICYP in the buffer zone. UNFICYP maintains close collaboration with my mission of good offices, led by my Special Adviser, and other United Nations actors on the island. I recommend that the mandate of UNFICYP be extended for a period of six months, until 31 July 2013.

43. In line with relevant Security Council resolutions, most recently resolution 2058 (2012), the Secretariat will remain engaged in contingency planning in relation to the settlement. The planning will continue to be guided by developments in the negotiations and views of the parties on the possible role of the United Nations in this respect.

44. At the same time, I shall continually keep the operations of UNFICYP under close review, taking into account developments on the ground and the views of the parties, and shall revert to the Council with recommendations, as appropriate, for further adjustments to the UNFICYP mandate, force levels and concept of operations as soon as warranted.

45. In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to my Special Representative and Chief of Mission, Lisa M. Buttenheim, and to the Force Commander, Major General Chao Liu, and to the men and women serving in UNFICYP for the efficiency and commitment with which they have discharged the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Security Council.

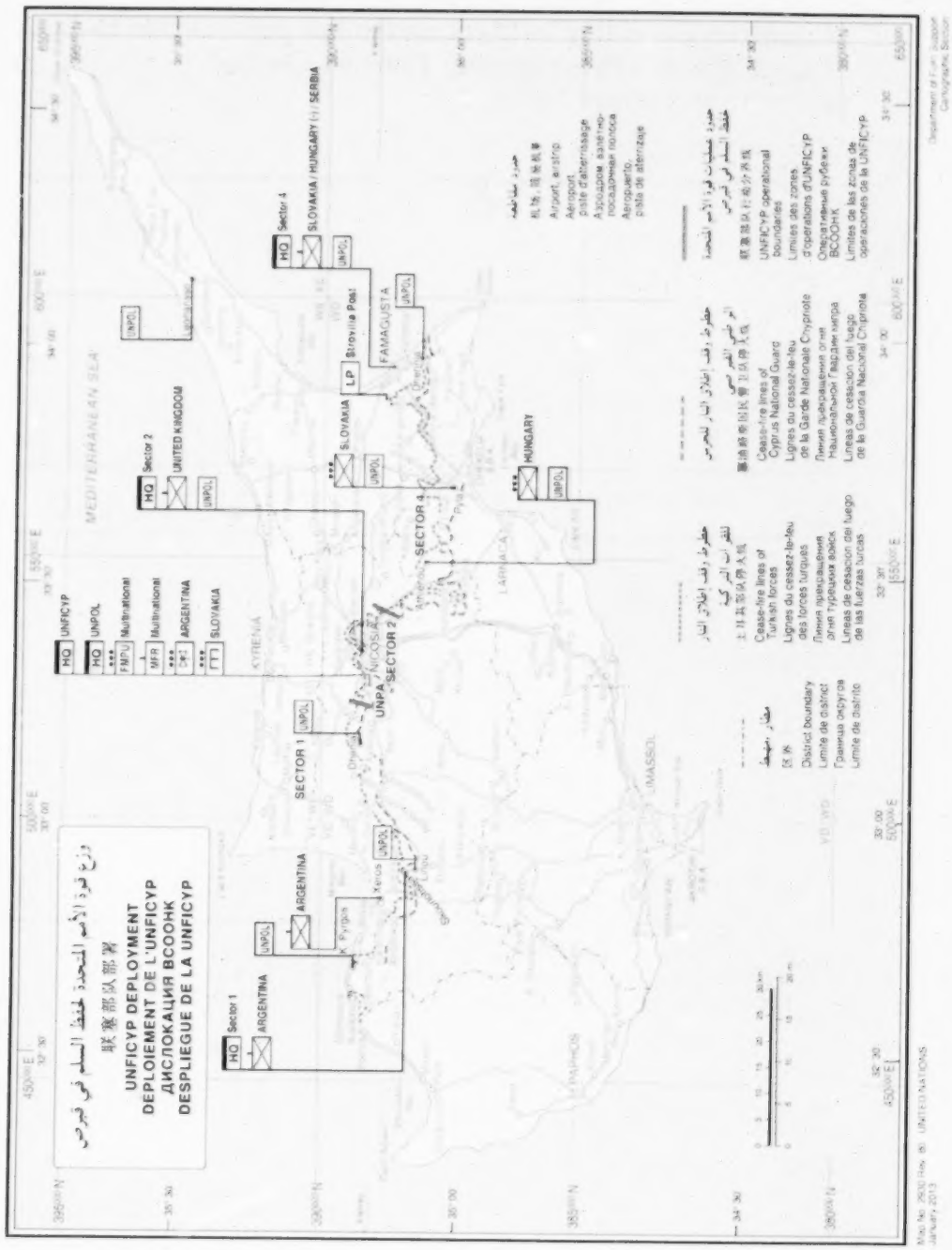
Annex

Countries providing military and police personnel to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (as at 15 December 2012)

Country	*Military personnel*
Argentina[a]	295
Austria	4
Canada	1
China[b]	2
Hungary	77
Slovakia[c]	207
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	274
Total	**860**

Country	*United Nations police*
Australia	15
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8
Croatia	4
El Salvador	1
India	8
Ireland	12
Italy	4
Montenegro	3
Serbia	2
Ukraine	8
Total	**65**

[a] The Argentinean contingent includes soldiers from Brazil (1), Chile (15) and Paraguay (14).
[b] China is using one vacant Canadian and one British post at UNFICYP headquarters.
[c] The Slovakian contingent includes soldiers from Croatia (2) and Serbia (46).


UNFICYP DEPLOYMENT
DEPLOIEMENT DE L'UNFICYP
ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ ВСООНК
DESPLIEGUE DE LA UNFICYP
UNFICYP
UNPOL
Multinational
Multinational
ARGENTINA
SLOVAKIA
Sector 1
ARGENTINA
Sector 2
UNITED KINGDOM
Sector 4
SLOVAKIA / HUNGARY (1) SERBIA
SLOVAKIA
HUNGARY
SECTOR 1
SECTOR 2
SECTOR 4
UNPA
NICOSIA
KYRENIA
FAMAGUSTA
LARNACA
LIMASSOL
PAPHOS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Cease-fire lines of Turkish forces
Lignes du cessez-le-feu des forces turques
Cease-fire lines of Cyprus National Guard
Lignes du cessez-le-feu de la Garde Nationale Chypriote
UNFICYP operational boundaries
Limites des zones d'operations d'UNFICYP
District boundary
Limite de district
Airport, airstrip
Aéroport, piste d'atterrissage
Aэродром взлетно-посадочная полоса
Aeropuerto, pista de aterrizaje
Limites de las zonas de operaciones de la UNFICYP
UNITED NATIONS